

ELEMENT I 10: GOALS AND POLICIES**01 INTRODUCTION**

State Guide Plan Element 110, Goals and Policies, was approved by the State Planning Council on November 13, 1974.

The element presents a statement of goals and policies for the physical, economic, and social development of Rhode Island. The purpose of this statement is to establish a framework of fundamental objectives to guide the formulation of plans and implementation of programs.

02 ISSUES ADDRESSED

Setting goals in a dynamic society is a complex problem. Establishing goals involves making decisions about the future. There is an understandable tendency on the part of all governments formed by free societies to deal with problems as they arise and to make decisions when they are required. This inclination is strengthened when the continuous struggle with daily problems leaves little time and money for consideration of future directions, except in the most implicit manner.

Goal-setting is further complicated by the problems of timing and priorities. The goals of any diverse community will change rapidly over time, and their priorities, or the relative importance of various goals, will change from day to day. Any statement of goals is, therefore, subject to sudden and drastic revision.

Worthwhile goals are frequently in conflict. The need for open space and recreation areas conflicts with the need to accommodate now urban growth, or to increase the property tax base. The need for industrial development to meet employment objectives may conflict with pollution control objectives.

Finally, knowledge of the real goals of any community is always incomplete, since goals are seldom explicitly stated, except in the most general terms, and tend to become more controversial as they become more specific. The goals of a democratic society cannot be laid down by fiat, but must be derived from that society. They must express the community's concept of its present condition and future development in sufficiently definitive terms to constitute a framework for formulating and testing plans and proposals.

These problems point up the essential characteristics of a statement of goals and policies which is useful in guiding the future development of the state's environment. Development goals and policies must set criteria for dealing with real problems and provide a stable basis for decision-making, which can continuously adjust to changing conditions and needs. Goals that are of real value in raising horizons and improving conditions must reflect ideals in abstract terms; they are values to be sought, rather than ends to be achieved. But they must be more than vague statements of basic values or promotional rhetoric. To provide meaningful guidance in decision-making, the goals set at any point in time must be statements of intermediate rather than final purpose. Useful goals must be expressed as standards, rather than as concrete destinations which can be reached in a stated period of time by application of a specified quantity of resources. The statement of goals and policies attempts to incorporate these characteristics.

03 GOALS AND POLICIES

The development goals established in this element are grouped into four broad categories: human resources, economic development, physical development, and facilities and services. Each goal is followed by a summary list of policies which can be followed and actions which can be taken in pursuit of that goal.

A. Human Resource Goals and Policies

GOAL 1: EXPANSION OF OPPORTUNITIES FOR PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

1. Vigorous enforcement of anti-discrimination laws and other affirmative measures to promote equal opportunity for all people in employment, housing, education and social organizations.
2. Expand day care and other programs for the physical and social rehabilitation of the physically, mentally, and culturally handicapped.
3. Encourage the expansion and improvement of private and public pension plans with particular reference to flexible retirement ages.
4. Expand the opportunities for greater citizen participation in state and community affairs.
5. Intensity a revalidation system for determining eligibility for welfare payments to assure that the fullest possible assistance can be given to those in need.
6. Intensity efforts to make more effective use of the talents of those senior citizens and youthful citizens who desire to make this contribution to an improvement of our society.
7. Establish geriatric day care centers to eliminate the need for many elderly to enter institutions or other long-term facilities.
8. Expand the state's youth program planning capabilities.
9. Expand adoption placement and foster parent programs to meet growing needs.

GOAL 2: STRIVE FOR A LIVING ENVIRONMENT WHICH FOSTERS A GREATER SENSE OF IDENTITY AND INDIVIDUALITY

1. Rehabilitate or rebuild obsolescent and deteriorating urban areas with emphasis on the continued occupation of such areas by the indigenous population.
2. Maintain a diversity of income, racial, ethnic and employment groups in residential communities.
3. Provide greater opportunities to(economic, geographic and cultural mobility and prevent further concentration of the poor and disadvantaged.

4. Focus social and physical renewal programs on the same area at the same time.
 5. Develop improved mechanisms for soliciting input from the residents in planning for the development of facilities and services.
- GOAL 3: CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT IN THE STRUCTURE AND OPERATIONS OF GOVERNMENTS AND OF THEIR RESPONSIVENESS TO THE CITIZENRY
1. Acquire adequate revenues to support governmental functions drawn from flexible sources and equitably assessed.
 2. Develop improved mechanisms for communications between the citizen and his government and between the government and the citizens.
 3. Prevent conflicts and duplication between different levels of government.
 4. Broaden consumer protection services and programs.
 5. Make greater use of analytical tools for programming expenditures in terms of goals to be achieved and for simulating and evaluating potential results of alternative decisions.
- GOAL 4: EXPANSION AND EQUALIZATION OF OPPORTUNITIES IN EDUCATIONAL AND CULTURAL PURSUITS
1. Expand existing and develop additional non-formal, non-school cultural and educational opportunities as those represented in libraries, museums and the arts.
 2. Expand adult education resources and encourage broader participation in adult education programs.
 3. Improve the educational quality of the schools by improving curricula, expanding programs for the gifted and the slow learners, instituting additional experimental programs, and reducing student-teacher ratios.
 4. Develop improved methods of training teachers to better meet the changing needs in education and the individual needs of their students.
 5. Expand the opportunities for female students to participate more fully in scholastic athletic programs on both the primary and secondary levels.
 6. Foster the increased development of neighborhood cultural activities and programs.
 7. Expand the grant-in-aid program to individual artists.

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GOAL 5: REDUCE THE NUMBER OF FAMILIES WITH INCOMES BELOW THE POVERTY LEVEL, AND INCREASE MINIMUM INCOME LEVELS

1. Through the congressional delegation, support legislation to increase the minimum wage level.
2. Eliminate racial, religious, ethnic sex barriers to employment and job advancement.
3. Develop need surveys and studies in an effort to more accurately delineate target groups for special services.
4. Expand day care center programs to permit more people to enter the labor force and thus decrease the welfare roles.
5. Reduce transportation barriers to employment primarily through expansion and reorientation of public transportation systems.
6. Improve the retainability of potential employees from disadvantaged groups through sensitivity training programs for job supervisors.
7. Increase property tax exemption for the aged and the handicapped.

B. Economic Development Goals and Policies

GOAL 1: MAINTENANCE OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AT A RATE ADEQUATE TO SUPPORT THE STATE'S POPULATION IN A MANNER CONSISTENT WITH THE STATE'S CHARACTERISTICS, CAPABILITIES, AND ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES.

1. Attract more service type entities into the state, such as regional and corporate headquarters, and more ocean and marine oriented industries.
2. Increase the supply of venture capital through various mechanisms so as to assist existing firms in expanding their facilities, and to attract new firms into the state.
3. Provide for required infrastructural facilities in conjunction with the selection of potential industrial sites and commercial centers.
4. Expand the markets for the state's products and services through improved communications and transportation facilities.
5. Stimulate greater cooperation between the state, private industry and the academic community, in industrial research and development activities.
6. Consider regional needs and opportunities in planning for the future economic development of the state.
7. Improve the coordination of federal, regional, state and local economic development policies, programs and projects.
8. Expand the resources available for promotion of the state's tourist attractions.

GOAL 2: REDUCTION OF UNEMPLOYMENT AND UNDER-EMPLOYMENT

1. Provide more jobs for Rhode Island workers through increased industrial development.
2. Minimize cyclical and seasonal effects on employment through greater diversification of the employment base.
3. Provide more employability development services to assist unemployed workers in obtaining and holding meaningful jobs.
4. Encourage industry to revise job specifications, where possible, so as to meet changing labor force standards.
5. Encourage private industry to make greater use of the state Job-Bank.

GOAL 3: FULLER AND MORE EFFECTIVE USE OF MANPOWER DEVELOPMENT RESOURCES

1. Motivate young people to go into vocational training fields.
2. Achieve greater coordination of the efforts of public and private manpower development programs.
3. Make vocational education more readily available to more people throughout their productive lives.
4. Continually reorient vocational training programs to meet changing occupational requirements and new growth opportunities.
5. Strengthen resources for self study facilities for people wanting to start new careers or improve their knowledge and skills of their present jobs.
6. Make better use of occupational and industrial data for development of training programs and community manpower planning programs.
7. Improve the system for providing information services to high school counselors about the labor market of the future.
8. Amplify counseling services geared to a continuous motivation of individuals to complete the programs.

GOAL 4: SUSTAIN INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT AT A RATE CONSISTENT WITH REGIONAL RESOURCES AND CAPABLE OF PROVIDING A BROAD RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR AN EXPANDING LABOR FORCE.

1. Reserve a sufficient number of desirable sites for industrial development through protective regulation or acquisition by the state.
2. Relate the location of industrial concentrations to residential development and transportation patterns in order to minimize conflicts and insure accessibility.
3. Select industrial locations which can provide a wide range of parcel sizes and essential utility and transportation services.

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4. Conserve and improve existing industrial development by removing non- related and conflicting activities and land uses, wherever possible.
- GOAL 5: PROVISION OF COMMERCIAL SERVICES AND FACILITIES NEEDED TO SERVE AN EXPANDING POPULATION
1. Stabilize and enhance older commercial core areas.
 2. Develop plans which allocate adequate areas to commercial use in varied sizes suitable for neighborhood, community, and regional retail centers.
 3. Minimize the conflict between commercial areas and other urban functions through appropriate spatial arrangements and development controls.
 4. Improve public transportation facilities between residential areas and commercial centers.
- GOAL 6: MAINTAIN AND UPGRADE RESOURCES ESSENTIAL TO THE COMMERCIAL AND SPORT FISHING INDUSTRIES
1. Reduce pollution in the state's water bodies.
 2. Protect and preserve tidal marshes and shellfish beds.
 3. Improve harbors, anchorages, channels and docks for commercial and pleasure boating.
 4. Investigate additional uses for marine life products and by-products.
 5. Encourage development of related industries in conjunction with fishing ports.

C. Physical Development Goals and Policies

- GOAL 1: CONSIDERATION OF ENERGY REQUIREMENTS IN PLANNING FOR LAND USE
1. Develop land use plans that promote conservation of energy required to serve future residential, industrial and commercial development.
 2. Develop and employ adequate location and siting criteria for power generating plants.
 3. Minimize the adverse impact of power generation and transmission facilities on the environment by careful planning and by capitalizing on potential compatible uses to the greatest extent possible.
 4. Consider land use implications of new alternative energy sources.
- GOAL 2: ACHIEVEMENT OF A HARMONIOUS RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN POPULATION AND THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT
1. Relate state land use policies to a population ceiling approximating 1.5 million.
 2. Develop land use plans which accommodate patterns of urbanization and economic development in a manner which considers environmental capacity and

offers a range of alternative locations consistent with wise and balanced uses of natural resources.

3. Educate the total citizenry regarding environmental planning needs, limitations and opportunities.
4. Intensify program efforts to reduce pressures for development created by assessment and taxation policies.
5. Apply available technology to the problem of accommodating a rapidly shrinking living space and resource base to the needs of the present and future residents.
6. Provide a broad range of choice among good living environments: urban, suburban, and rural.

GOAL 3: THE PRESERVATION AND PROTECTION OF OPEN SPACE

1. Consider open space requirements in terms of complete ecological systems.
2. Protect and enhance scenic values.
3. Retain selected natural areas in their present condition indefinitely, in order to provide a land reserve for long range future needs and to protect rural areas.
4. Adopt tax policies favoring continued agricultural or forest use in selected areas.
5. Acquire development easements permitting continued farming operations.
6. Preserve, through acquisition, those rail corridors which are to be abandoned, for use as utility corridors or for recreational purposes.

GOAL 4: PROTECTION OF THE COASTAL REGION

1. Preserve, develop, and where possible, restore the resources of the coastal region in order to maximize the benefits from its variety of assets.
2. Enhance the quality of the marine environment by reducing pollution and protecting endangered marine life.
3. Prevent over development of the coastal region.
4. Protect against the deterioration of existing development.
5. Reduce conflicts in the coastal region between uses and government jurisdictions.
6. Prevent the filling in of coastal waters and wetlands except where absolutely required for the health and welfare of the people.
7. Extend the jurisdiction of the state over offshore waters to the greatest extent possible.
8. Expand the anadromous fish restoration program.

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GOAL 5: REVITALIZATION OF OLDER CENTRAL CITIES

1. Stimulate greater industrial and commercial interest in central cities through promotion, financial assistance and provision of public facilities.
2. Emphasize the role of central cities as cultural, entertainment, and communications centers.
3. Protect stable neighborhoods and extend their useful life through continuous upgrading and modernization.
4. Utilize urban renewal programs to ameliorate land use conflicts, convert areas from inappropriate to appropriate land uses, and correct deficiencies in circulation patterns.

GOAL 6: CONTROL OF URBAN SPRAWL AND DISPERSION

1. Develop plans which foster a more compact growth thus reducing the cost of urban services.
2. Strive for a greater coordination of the development plans and activities of the municipalities within the metropolitan area.
3. Develop new and more effective concepts in zoning and land development control.
4. Reduce mandatory travel time between home and work by relating housing and places of employment, spatially.
5. Foster the application of new, environmentally sound development patterns which promote compact growth while providing more pleasing visual aspects by avoiding a uniform grain of development.

GOAL 7: PROTECTION AGAINST LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY DAMAGE CAUSED BY FLOODING OR EXTREME TIDAL ACTION

1. Limit the intensity of development in unprotected shoreline areas and in flood plain areas, through flood plain zoning and other controls.
2. Prevent further blockage or restriction of natural drainage channels.
3. Improve the maintenance and design of flood control reservoirs.
4. Replace obsolete or inadequate dams and flow control facilities.
5. Reduce the effect of shoreline erosion through erosion prevention structures, plant materials, and control of the frequency and intensity of use.

GOAL 8. ALLEVIATION OF WATER POLLUTION PROBLEMS

1. Improve the coordination of local water pollution control management plans and programs and seek regional solutions to the greatest extent possible.
2. Continue the close coordination of the state's water pollution control planning activities with those concerned with water resource development and land use development.
3. Assure that all proposals for water pollution control management facilities and systems are fully analyzed and evaluated in terms of their impact on the social, economic and physical environment.
4. Limit intensive development to areas served by public sewer systems which can provide for the adequate collection and treatment of the liquid wastes generated.
5. Require pre-treatment of sewage by industrial operations, where appropriate.
6. Upgrade treatment in municipal or other treatment plant facilities, where appropriate.
7. Support and encourage efforts to prevent and control spills of oil or contaminants.
8. Encourage research to better determine potential effects of thermal pollution on the marine environment.
9. Support efforts to maintain and strengthen the state's regulatory activities for water pollution control.

GOAL 9: ALLEVIATION OF AIR POLLUTION PROBLEMS

1. Support efforts to maintain and strengthen the state's regulatory activities for air pollution control.
2. Achieve stronger coordination of air pollution control planning activities with state and local land use planning activities.
3. Strengthen controls over the use of pesticides and other toxic agents.
4. Extend requirements for prior approval of plans for activities with air pollution potential, to cover new facilities which have a large amount of associated automobile activity.

GOAL 10: ALLEVIATION OF SOLID WASTE PROBLEMS

1. Support efforts to maintain and strengthen the state's regulatory activities.
2. Implement a disposal facility licensing program.
3. Reduce the number of disposal facilities through regionalization and reduction of the amount of solid waste to be landfilled.
4. Implement a statewide resource recovery program.

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5. Develop an overall state program which effectively integrates all elements of the solid waste problem and provides for the coordination of the required planning, regulatory, and management functions with other related state, local and private sector activities.

GOAL II: PROTECTION AND ENHANCEMENT OF HISTORIC VALUES

1. Support efforts to maintain and strengthen state and local programs for preservation of significant historic places through identification, acquisition and rehabilitation.
2. Encourage more widespread use of historic district zoning.
3. Achieve greater coordination among state agencies, in preservation matters.
4. Utilize historical survey and planning programs to emphasize and preserve the identity of historic neighborhoods and communities.

D Facilities and Services

GOAL 1: IMPROVEMENT OF THE QUALITY OF PUBLIC EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES AT ALL LEVELS

1. Expand the use of modern teaching equipment and provide up-to-date school buildings and facilities.
2. Expand the resources and use of educational television.
3. Increase the financial resources to be used in the construction, equipment, and maintenance of school buildings and facilities.
4. Regionalize at least the specialized facilities and services to gain operating efficiencies and broaden the service base.
5. Improve the physical training programs and facilities, especially in the case of female students.
6. Improve the natural science laboratory facilities, particularly on the elementary level.

GOAL 2: COORDINATED DEVELOPMENT AND USE OF THE STATE'S PUBLIC WATER RESOURCES

1. Base priority for development of water resources on all factors associated with both the sources and the contemplated uses.
2. Assure that those surface and groundwater sources which have been identified as good potential sources for future development receive the required degree of protection and management.
3. Coordinate development of local systems and coordinate planning for future water resource development with other elements of the state guide plan.

4. Encourage the development of unified municipal-wide, or regional systems to serve those communities now served by several small systems or by special districts.
5. Maximize the re-use of water required for industrial processing.
6. Reduce water pollution and upgrade water quality to its eventual use.
7. Consider the multiple use potential for all water resource development projects.
8. Consider ways to reduce demand and use of public water, including reorganization of existing price structures.

GOAL 3: A BALANCED AND INTEGRATED MULTI-MODAL INTRASTATE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT PROVIDES EFFICIENT AND ECONOMICAL MOVEMENT BETWEEN COMPONENT PARTS OF THE STATE AND OFFERS MIXIMUM POSSIBLE MOBILITY TO ALL ELEMENTS OF OUR SOCIETY

1. Provide a variety of transportation modes designed to meet the differing needs of different people, activities, and purposes of travel.
2. Evaluate all transportation system and corridor proposals in terms of the cause and effect relationship of those proposals upon social, economic, cultural and natural elements of the total environment.
3. Foster, in concert with all levels of government and the private sector, equitable financing for all modes of transportation consistent with needs and requirements of our society.
4. Reduce conflicts between transportation systems and other functions by locating transportation facilities at the edges of functional areas.
5. Consider transportation requirements in determining the spatial arrangements of land uses; attempt to minimize the need for transportation, consistent with other objectives.
6. Obtain a high aesthetic quality in transportation system design by visually relating design and location of facilities to the natural and cultural landscape.
7. Enact and enforce appropriate transportation safety measures.
8. Alleviate traffic congestion and reduce travel time between major centers.
9. Improve the peak period public transit services to better serve the suburban commuters.

GOAL 4: AN IMPROVED INTERSTATE TRANSPORTATION CAPABILITY

1. Insure that the total transportation needs of the state are considered at the national and state levels, for capital improvements, in the light of environmental and energy source limitations.
2. Improve high speed rail transportation to Boston, New York, and Washington.

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3. Expand commercial air service for direct intermediate distance travel.
4. Maintain and improve rail freight service to support industrial development.

GOAL 5: IMPROVED TRANSPORTATION TERMINAL FACILITIES

1. Maximize the interface between transportation modes by combining terminal and automobile parking facilities.
2. Extend the hinterland of the Port of Providence through improved transportation facilities and reduced ground transportation charges.
3. Diversify the products shipped through the Port of Providence, emphasizing package cargo.

GOAL 6: ADEQUATE AND DIVERSE RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES AND FACILITIES TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE STATE'S CITIZENS AND TO ATTRACT AND SERVE TOURISTS

1. Insure that the needs and recreational interests of people of all social and age groups and abilities in all areas of the state, are considered to the fullest extent possible in developing state recreational facility plans.
2. Relate the type and size of recreational facilities to the pertinent characteristics of the service area.
3. Base acquisition and development programs and priorities on frequent studies of demand and usage.
4. Improve access to all types of recreation facilities.
5. Insure that local governments have adequate statutory authority to meet their responsibilities, including the power to acquire property through eminent domain proceedings authorized by the General Assembly, and to protect and preserve open space through regulation of land use.
6. Provide state financial and technical assistance, and guidance, where needed to stimulate capital investment and improvement.
7. Encourage private investment in recreational facilities and areas.
8. Promote recreational activity among the population as a means of improving their health and general welfare.
9. Develop complete management plans for state owned recreation lands with consideration of zoning for compatible uses by an optimum number of users.
10. Acquire revenues needed for acquisition and development of recreation areas through increased hunting and fishing license fees and increased parking fees at state beaches.
11. Expand conservation education and forest fire prevention programs.

GOAL 7: GREATER OPPORTUNITIES FOR WATER-ORIENTED RECREATION

1. Reduce pollution of water bodies.
2. Maintain an active program for acquisition of sites and providing access to salt and fresh water bodies.
3. Obtain easements and fishing rights along stream courses.
4. Make maximum use of water bodies and watersheds for recreation and other purposes wherever possible, in a manner consistent with the characteristics and uses of the water bodies themselves and with the standards governing water supplies established by the Rhode Island Water Resources Board.

GOAL 8: ACHIEVEMENT OF THE HIGHEST POSSIBLE STANDARDS OF PUBLIC HEALTH AND SAFETY IN PUBLIC FACILITIES AND SERVICES

1. Strengthen the system of medical care delivery throughout the state so as to meet the needs of an expanding, aging population.
2. Operate health care facilities in a manner designed to minimize cost increases.
3. Extend employee health benefits and health insurance coverage.
4. Locate facilities so as to properly serve present and future population distributions.
5. Concentrate facilities to maximize joint use of specialized facilities and equipment, staff specialists, and teaching programs.
6. Improve the physical resources of the state health laboratories.
7. Train more medical people and make greater use of qualified paramedics as "field" medical officers.

GOAL 9: AN EFFECTIVE PROGRAM TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY AND BROADEN THE CHOICE OF HOUSING

1. Encourage programs which directly assist low income families to acquire adequate housing, rather than programs of indirect assistance which benefit intermediaries at public expense while aiding low income families only indirectly or not at all.
2. Promote research and improve design and construction techniques to reduce housing costs.
3. Strengthen the enforcement of building and housing codes, and make requirements more flexible by using performance standards where appropriate.
4. Encourage zoning and subdivision laws that eliminate involuntary housing ghettos.
5. Provide housing in locations convenient to other activities and existing facilities.
6. Replace obsolete and dilapidated housing.

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7. Provide a broad range of choice among housing types, designs, and costs to meet diverse individual and family needs.
8. Promote the establishment of higher residential densities and smaller lot frontages in urban and suburban areas where public water, sewer, transit and other facilities and services exist or are likely to be provided in the near future, and promote lower densities and larger frontages where public utilities are unlikely to be provided.
9. Assist communities in the planning and provision of low and moderate-income, and elderly public and publicly assisted housing in the state according to housing needs.
10. Encourage implementation of a fair housing program whereby municipalities in a designated market area would more equitably share the responsibility for providing the area's low and moderate income housing needs, and would pool their resources to this end.
11. Make greater use of a "scattered site" approach when developing public or -family single-site assisted housing, as an alternative to large multi construction.

GOAL 10: IMPROVED LAW ENFORCEMENT AND CORRECTION SERVICES AND FACILITIES

1. Improve the quality of the law enforcement agencies in the state through increased manpower, raising the qualifications for law-enforcement officers and improved facilities and equipment.
2. Broaden the training of law enforcement officers to include courses in social science and community relations.
3. Increase the representation of minority groups in the state's law enforcement agencies.
4. Improve the quality of the state's correction institutions through improved facilities and equipment, improved training for staff personnel and improved job and skill training programs and facilities for the inmates.
5. Improve and expand probation and ex-convict counseling programs.
6. Expand the scope of outside placement and work and education release programs as an alternative to incarceration.

04 STRATEGIES

There is consensus on the general goals to which the state is committed. This element presents the consensus statement of goals and policies for the physical, economic, and social development of Rhode Island. The purpose of this statement is to establish a framework of fundamental objectives (goals) to guide the formulation of plans and implementation of programs.

These fundamental objectives (goals) are contained in this element and within the various other elements of the State Guide Plan. As established by state law the guide plan centralizes and integrates those long-range goals, policies and plans with which short-range plans and implementing programs of all state agencies must be consistent.

An important way in which a framework of goals can guide development is its use as a yardstick against which agency programs and proposed public or publicly subsidized private actions affecting development can be measured. A drawback in using the State Guide Plan as such a yardstick is that the goals and policies are dispersed among a dozen functional plans written over a time span of more than a decade. The result: sometimes ambiguous or potentially self-contradictory goals and policies.

Since its first element was adopted in 1969, at least one element of Rhode Island's State Guide Plan has been adopted by the State Planning Council each year. Each of these elements is a distinct plan dealing in depth with a development function. The subject matter of the elements range from water supply to economic development, and include recreation, housing, land use, and all aspects of transportation. Together they make up the state's official guide plan to promote its orderly growth and development.

A fundamental philosophy of the guide plan is to orient development to complement the state's existing natural and man-made resources. To fulfill its function, the State Guide Plan should indeed be able to guide decisions and actions that affect Rhode Island development. The crucial yet elusive path between plan and implementation is at the crux of the use of these goals and policies.